



Southwestern PA Area Agency on Aging

PICKLEBALL EVENT RULES OF PLAY

**Please have all cell phones turned off.
Officials shall read the rules aloud prior to the start of each tournament.
AAA and/or provider staff may not compete in the Games.**

Team

Pickleball will be played as a doubles team event with double elimination.

Each team will consist of two players with one designated alternate, if desired. The alternate may be placed in one of the two positions before the start of the game. No substitutions will be made during the game except in the event of an emergency.

Players will indicate their skill levels (beginner, intermediate or advanced) on the event registration form. Teams will be matched for play based upon the players' indicated skill levels.

All players and alternates must complete a SWPA Area Agency on Aging Release and Waiver of Liability Form.

The team which wins the most games, out of three games played, is the winner. It may not be necessary to play the third game if the same team wins the first two games played.

Equipment

Players have the option to bring their own pickleball paddles for use during the games or players may use the paddles provided by the Agency/facility.

Determining Serving Team

Any fair method can be used to determine which team has first choice of side, service, or receive. (Example: Write a 1 or 2 on the back of the score sheet.)

The Serve

The serve must be made underhand.

Paddle contact with the ball must be below the server's waist (navel level).

The serve is initiated with at least one foot behind the baseline; neither foot may contact the baseline or court until after the ball is struck.

The serve is made diagonally crosscourt and must land within the confines of the opposite diagonal court.

Only one serve attempt is allowed, except in the event of a let (the ball touches the net on the serve and lands on the proper service court; let serves are replayed).

Service Sequence

Both players on the serving team have the opportunity to serve and score points until they commit a fault *(except for the first service sequence of each new game).

The first serve of each side-out is made from the right/even court.

If a point is scored, the server switches sides and the server initiates the next serve from the left/odd court.

As subsequent points are scored, the server continues switching back and forth until a fault is committed and the first server loses the serve.

When the first server loses the serve the partner then serves from their correct side of the court (except for the first service sequence of the game*).

The second server continues serving until his team commits a fault and loses the serve to the opposing team.

Once the service goes to the opposition (at side out), the first serve is from the right/even court and both players on that team have the opportunity to serve and score points until their team commits two faults.

At the beginning of each new game only one partner on the serving team has the opportunity to serve before faulting, after which the service passes to the receiving team.

Scoring

Points are scored only by the serving team.

Games will be played to 11 points, win by 2.

When the serving team's score is even (0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10) the player who was the first server in the game for that team will be in the right/even court when serving or receiving; when odd (1, 3, 5, 7, 9) that player will be in the left/odd court when serving or receiving.

The AAA official or an appointed unbiased monitor will audit scoring during the event to ensure scores.

If a player disagrees with the official's decision, the objection must be brought to the attention of the official during the event. The official's decision is final.

Two-Bounce Rule

When the ball is served, the receiving team must let it bounce before returning, and then the serving team must let it bounce before returning, thus two bounces.

After the ball has bounced once in each team's court, both teams may either volley the ball (hit the ball before it bounces) or play it off a bounce (ground stroke).

The two-bounce rule eliminates the serve and volley advantage and extends rallies.

Non-Volley Zone

The non-volley zone is the court area within 7 feet on both sides of the net.

Volleying is prohibited within the non-volley zone. This rule prevents players from executing smashes from a position within the zone.

It is a fault if, when volleying a ball, the player steps on the non-volley zone, including the line and/or when the player's momentum causes them or anything they are wearing or carrying to touch the non-volley zone including the associated lines.

It is a fault if, after volleying, a player is carried by momentum into or touches the non-volley zone, even if the volleyed ball is declared dead before this happens.

A player may legally be in the non-volley zone any time other than when volleying a ball.

The non-volley zone is commonly referred to as "the kitchen."

Line Calls

A ball contacting any line, except the non-volley zone line on a serve, is considered "in."

A serve contacting the non-volley zone line is short and a fault.

Faults

A fault is any action that stops play because of a rule violation.

A fault by the receiving team results in a point for the serving team.

A fault by the serving team results in the server's loss of serve or side out.